

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 20, 2003. Claims 1-6, 8-26, 28-46, 48-66, and 68-94 are presented for examination, of which claims 1, 10, 20, 41, 50, 60, 93, and 94 are in independent form. Claims 7, 27, 47, and 67 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and will not be mentioned further. Claims 1, 10, 18-20, 39-41, 50, 58-60, 79, 80, 93, and 94 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention, and Claims 5, 9, 12, 14, 15, 28, 29, 33, 35, 36, 45, 49, 52, 54, 55, 62, 65, 68, 69, 73, 75, and 76 have been amended as to matters of form and to ensure proper antecedent basis. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, 10, 16, 17, 20-24, 26, 30, 31, 37, 38, 41-44, 46, 50, 56, 57, 60-64, 66, 70, 71, 77, 78, 93 and 94 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,466,968 (*Shirai et al.*). Claims 5, 11, 25, 32, 45, 51, 65 and 72 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shirai et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,433,800 (*Holtz*); Claims 8, 9, 18, 19, 28, 29, 39, 40, 48, 49, 58, 59, 68, 69 and 79-92 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shirai et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,610 (*Uchida et al.*); and Claims 12-15, 33-36, 52-55 and 73-76 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shirai et al.* in view of *Uchida et al.* and *Holtz*.¹

As shown above, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1, 10, 20, 41, 50, 60, 93, and 94 in terms that more clearly define the present invention. Applicant

¹/Although the body of the Office Action does not address Claim 32, Applicant believes the Examiner intended to reject it for the same reasons as for Claims 11, 51, and 72.

submits that these amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The present invention relates to an electronic mail system in which it is desired to avoid problems and inconvenience conventionally associated with the sending of e-mail having attachments of both a document and information distinct from but associated with the document.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus with a function of transmitting electronic mail. The apparatus comprises designating means, acquisition means, and generating means. The designating means designates a desired object, stored in storage means, to be attached to electronic mail. The acquisition means acquires access information that includes limitation of access to the object designated by the designating means and access permission information for permitting a user to access the object designated by the designating means regardless of whether or not the user is registered to access the storage means. The generating means generates electronic mail information, which includes the access information.

One of the notable features of Claim 1 is the access information, which includes limitation of access to the object designated by the designating means and access permission information for permitting a user to access the object designated by the designating means regardless of whether or not the user is registered to access the storage

means. By virtue of this feature, a user who is not registered to access the storage means storing the object can still access that object (see page 11, lines 4-8, of the specification).²

Shirai et al. relates to a system that attaches additional information to an electronic mail, which indicates access information of an object (see column 12, lines 36-40). *Shirai et al.* discusses an access list 301g (see Figure 14) listing users who are permitted to access a transmission target file. When a transmission target file is designated, a mail tool 302 extracts users who may access a designated file from the access list 301g and automatically sets the extracted users as designation users (see column 10, line 61, to column 11, line 6). However, *Shirai et al.* is not believed to teach or suggest access information which includes limitation of access to the object designated by the designating means and access permission information for permitting a user to access the object designated by the designating means regardless of whether or not the user is registered to access the storage means, as claimed in Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable over *Shirai et al.*

Uchida et al. and *Holtz* are not seen to overcome the deficiencies of *Shirai et al.* *Uchida et al.* relates to sending an electronic mail with an access code. According to the *Uchida et al.* approach, when a recipient wants to acquire the electronic mail, it is necessary to access a mail server using the access code. However, nothing has been found in *Uchida et al.* that is believed to teach or suggest accessing an object attached to an electronic mail. Further, *Uchida et al.* is not understood to teach or suggest the access information of Claim 1. *Holtz* is understood to merely teach displaying a list of electronic

²/It is to be understood, of course, that the claim scope is not limited by the details of the described embodiments, which are referred to only to facilitate explanation.

mails and attached objects in an at-a-glance form. Further, *Holtz* discusses dragging and dropping an object icon 44 to an iconic representation 54 of a toolbar 56 (Figure 3).

Nothing has been found in *Holtz* that is believed to teach or suggest the access information of Claim 1. Therefore, even if *Uchida et al.* and *Holtz* were to be combined with *Shirai et al.* (and assuming that such combination would be proper), the result would not meet the terms of Claim 1.

Claim 10 defines a receiver for receiving electronic mail including limitation of access to an object and access permission information for permitting a user to access the object regardless of whether or not the user is registered to access storage means in which the object is stored, similar to Claim 1. Claim 20 defines a system including the apparatuses of Claims 1 and 10. Applicant therefore believes that Claims 10 and 20 also are patentable for at least the above reasons.

Claims 41, 50, and 60 are method claims corresponding to Claims 1, 10, and 20, and Claims 93 and 94 are memory claims corresponding to Claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, these independent claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the above reasons.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

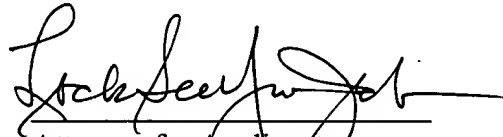
This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance. Therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37

C.F.R. § 1.116 and is respectfully requested, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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